

Message Text

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51

ACTION AF-10

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FM AMCONSUL JOHANNESBURG

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3610

INFO AMEMBASSY PRETORIA

AMCONSUL DURBAN

AMCONSUL CAPE TOWN

UNCLAS JOHANNESBURG 1279

CAPE TOWN ALSO FOR EMBASSY

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: SOCI, SF

SUBJ: SAG POSTPONES RENT INCREASES FOR WEST RAND BLACKS

REF: JOHANNESBURG A-41, AUGUST 28, 1974

1. FOLLOWING MEETING NOVEMBER 27 WITH REPRESENTATIVES OF OVER A MILLION BLACK RESIDENTS OF SOWETO & OTHER WEST RAND TOWNSHIPS MINISTER OF BANTU ADMINISTRATION BOTHA AGREED TO POSTPONE PROPOSED RENT INCREASES (A-41) UNTIL FEBRUARY, 1974.

2. SIX-MAN DELEGATION LED BY LENNOX MLONZI OF SOWETO URBAN BANTU COUNCIL (UBC) SUGGESTED THREE ALTERNATIVE WAYS OF RAISING MONEY TO MEET WEST RAND BANTU ADMINISTRATION BOARD'S ANTICIPATED R3,500,000 DEFICIT: FIRST WAS TO CHANNEL PROFITS FROM TOWNSHIP LIQUOR SALES TO BOARD RATHER THAN TO HOMELANDS GOVERNMENTS; SECOND WAS TO PROVIDE BOARD WITH SAG SUBSIDY; AND THIRD WAS TO RAISE LEVY OF EMPLOYERS OF BLACK LABOR FROM R1.50 PER MONTH PER WORKER TO R2.50.

3. MINISTER AGREED TO CONSIDER ALTERNATIVES & WEST RAND BOARD CHAIRMAN MANIE MULDER ANNOUNCED THAT IN FUTURE HIS BOARD WOULD REFER ITS ESTIMATES TO UBC'S PRIOR TO MAKING THEM PUBLIC. HE REMINDED CRITICS, HOWEVER, THAT TOWN COUNCILS WHICH PRECEDED BOARDS

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HAD NEVER FOLLOWED PRACTICE OF CONSULTING BLACKS PRIOR TO DECIDING

ON ESTIMATES.

4. COMMENT: IF WEST RAND URBAN BLACKS SUCCEED IN GETTING SAG TO
SHIFT BURDEN OF FUNDING BOARD DEFICITS FROM RENT PAYERS TO COMBINATION

OF SAG AND EMPLOYERS IT WILL CONSTITUTE SIGNIFICANT VICTORY FOR THOSE

WHO MAINTAIN THAT SAG SHOULD DEAL DIRECTLY WITH URBAN BLACKS RATHER
THAN INDIRECTLY THROUGH HOMELANDS GOVERNMENTS.

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